

upon the people of the United States, including government officials, educators, and administrators, to observe this week with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities honoring America's Historically Black Colleges and Universities and their graduates.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this seventeenth day of September, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-fourth.

William J. Clinton

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NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on September 22. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

The President's Radio Address

September 18, 1999

Good morning. This month millions of students across America are beginning the last school semester of the 20th century. Today I want to talk about our obligation to give them the education they deserve to succeed in the new century, for more than ever, in this information age, education is the key to individual opportunity and our share of prosperity.

That's why, even though we've worked hard to cut spending to balance the budget, we've also nearly doubled our investment in education and training. Many people said we couldn't do it, but we proved them wrong.

Today, we have the longest peacetime expansion in our history. After years and years of deficits, we now have budget surpluses for years ahead. More people have a chance to realize the American dream than ever before. More children have the chance to realize their full potential than ever before. We've laid a foundation to preserve our prosperity for future generations.

Now, as the budget deadline rapidly approaches this year, we face many of the same tough choices again. And once again, I think the answer is clear: To build a strong nation

in the new century, we must continue to invest in our future. That means we must strengthen Social Security, secure and modernize Medicare, pay off the national debt in 15 years, making America debt-free for the first time since 1835. And once again, it means we must invest in education, not sacrifice it.

Months ago now, I sent Congress a responsible budget to maintain our fiscal discipline and honor our commitment to our children's education. So far, the Republicans in Congress haven't put forward a budget of their own. In fact, they're so busy trying to figure out how to pay for their irresponsible tax plan that they're in serious danger of not meeting their obligation to finish the budget by the end of the budget year. Even worse, they're preparing to pay for their own pet projects at the expense of our children's education.

We know now that the Republicans' risky tax cut would force us to slash vital funding for education by as much as 50 percent over the next 10 years. But what many people don't know is that next year alone, the Republican plan would cut the bill that funds education by nearly 20 percent.

Now, if carried out, this plan would lead to some of the worst cuts in education in our history. More than 5,000 teachers, hired as part of my class size initiative, could be laid off. Fifty thousand students could be turned away from after-school and summer school programs. More than 2 million of our poorest students in our poorest communities would have a smaller chance of success in school and in the workplaces of the future. These aren't just numbers on a balance sheet; they're vital investments in our children and our future.

In a time when education is our top priority, Republicans in Congress are making it their lowest priority. So let me be clear: If the Republicans send me a bill that doesn't live up to our national commitment to education, I won't hesitate to veto it. If it undermines our efforts to hire high-quality teachers to reduce class size or to increase accountability in our public schools, I will veto it. If it fails to strengthen Head Start, after-school and summer school programs, I'll veto it. If it underfunds mentoring or college scholarship programs, I will veto it. If it sends

me a bill that turns its back on our children and their future, I'll send them back to the drawing board. I won't let Congress push through a budget that's paid for at the expense of our children and our future prosperity.

So, again, I ask Congress to put partisanship aside and send me a bill that puts our children's education first. Let's use the last school semester of the 21st century to prepare our children and our Nation for excellence in the 21st century.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from the Oval Office at the White House.

Radio Remarks on Terrorist Attacks in Russia

September 18, 1999

On behalf of the American people, I want to extend our deepest condolences to the families and friends of those who lost their lives in the recent terrorist bombings in Russia. We share your outrage over these cowardly acts. We know what kind of pain such tragedies can cause. Our own citizens have suffered from repeated acts of terrorism.

Not very long ago, a terrorist bombing took the lives of more than 160 Americans in our State of Oklahoma. The World Trade Center in New York City was bombed. Last year bombings at our Embassies in east Africa took the lives of American diplomats, along with hundreds of Kenyans and Tanzanians.

The crimes they suffered remind us that terrorism knows no borders, and that acts of terror anywhere are a threat to humanity everywhere. While we stand united with you in our grief, we also stand united with you in our resolve that terrorism will not go unpunished and will not undermine the work of democracy.

The United States is ready to work with Russia and the Russian people to stand against the scourge of terrorism. We are working with the allies elsewhere to make sure there is no safe haven for terrorists, and we want to work with Russia to isolate nations that support terror. Together, we can ensure that the future belongs to peacemakers not bomb throwers.

In the days ahead, our thoughts and our prayers will be with you as you work to rebuild from these terrible tragedies.

NOTE: The President's remarks were recorded at approximately 10:45 a.m. on September 18 in the Oval Office at the White House for later broadcast in Russia. These remarks were also made available on the White House Press Office Radio Actuality Line.

Remarks at the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation Dinner

September 18, 1999

Ladies and gentlemen, the main thing I want to say tonight is, thank you. Thank you to the Congressional Black Caucus for your leadership and your partnership, for your genuine friendship. Thank you to Jim Clyburn; to my friend of 27 years Eddie Bernice Johnson; to Eva Clayton; to the dean of the delegation, John Conyers; to your retiring member, and a great champion of education and human welfare, Bill Clay; to Corrine Brown and Elijah Cummings and Sheila Jackson Lee and all the other members of the CBC—I thank you for your kindness, your friendship, your support to me, to Hillary, to Al and Tipper Gore, to what we have done together. I thank Senator Carol Moseley-Braun for her continuing willingness to serve.

I welcome and congratulate the award winners, my friends Julius Chambers and Alvin Brown and Tom Joyner. Can you imagine Tom Joyner and his son thanking Al and me for being on his radio program? [Laughter] You know, even the people that don't like us don't think we're stupid. [Laughter] And I want to thank and congratulate Rear Admiral Evelyn Fields, who has done such a great job. She started as a cartographer and went on to chart a new course of opportunity not only for African-American women, but for all women. And thank you for honoring them.

I also would like to welcome the President of Haiti here, President Rene Preval. We're delighted to have him here, and we thank him for his friendship.

There are so many people here who have been associated with our administration, and